



## *Pinus taeda* Loblolly Pine<sup>1</sup>

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### INTRODUCTION

Loblolly Pine is a North American native which is usually seen from 50 to 80 feet tall with a 30-foot-spread though it is capable of reaching more than 150 feet in height (Fig. 1). This extremely fast-growing pine is pyramidal when young making it ideal for screening but loses its lower limbs as it grows older becoming a tall, stately specimen, windbreak, or dappled-shade tree. The six to nine-inch-long evergreen needles turn light green to brown during the winter. The often-paired cones are three to six inches long, red/brown, and have very sharp spines. They persist on the tree for several years and mature in the fall. The bark of Loblolly Pine is very thick which helps make this tree very resistant to fire in the wild.

### GENERAL INFORMATION

**Scientific name:** *Pinus taeda*

**Pronunciation:** PIE-nus TEE-duh

**Common name(s):** Loblolly Pine

**Family:** *Pinaceae*

**USDA hardiness zones:** 6B through 9 (Fig. 2)

**Origin:** native to North America

**Uses:** reclamation plant; screen; shade tree; specimen; no proven urban tolerance

**Availability:** generally available in many areas within its hardiness range

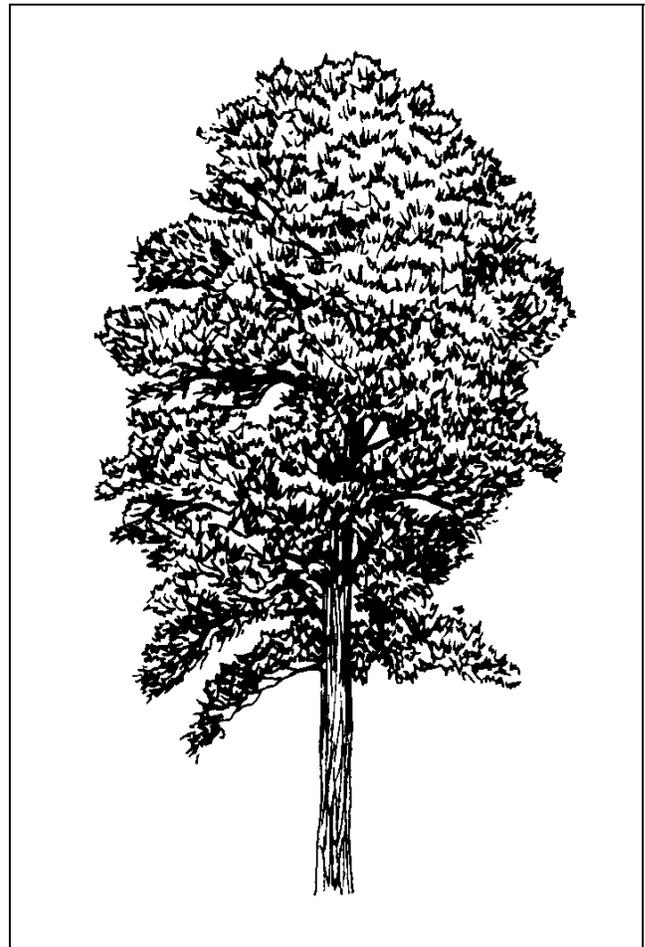


Figure 1. Mature Loblolly Pine.

### DESCRIPTION

**Height:** 50 to 80 feet

**Spread:** 30 to 35 feet

**Crown uniformity:** irregular outline or silhouette

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Figure 2. Shaded area represents potential planting range.

**Crown shape:** oval  
**Crown density:** open  
**Growth rate:** fast  
**Texture:** fine

### Foliage

**Leaf arrangement:** alternate; spiral  
**Leaf type:** simple  
**Leaf margin:** entire  
**Leaf shape:** needle-like (filiform)  
**Leaf venation:** parallel  
**Leaf type and persistence:** evergreen; fragrant; needle leaf evergreen  
**Leaf blade length:** 8 to 12 inches; 4 to 8 inches  
**Leaf color:** green  
**Fall color:** no fall color change  
**Fall characteristic:** not showy

### Flower

**Flower color:** yellow  
**Flower characteristics:** inconspicuous and not showy; spring flowering

### Fruit

**Fruit shape:** oval (Fig. 3)  
**Fruit length:** 3 to 6 inches  
**Fruit covering:** dry or hard  
**Fruit color:** brown  
**Fruit characteristics:** attracts squirrels and other mammals; fruit, twigs, or foliage cause significant litter; persistent on the tree; showy

### Trunk and Branches

**Trunk/bark/branches:** grow mostly upright and will not droop; not particularly showy; should be grown with a single leader; no thorns  
**Pruning requirement:** needs little pruning to develop a strong structure  
**Breakage:** susceptible to breakage either at the crotch due to poor collar formation, or the wood itself is weak and tends to break  
**Current year twig color:** brown  
**Current year twig thickness:** medium; thick  
**Wood specific gravity:** 0.51

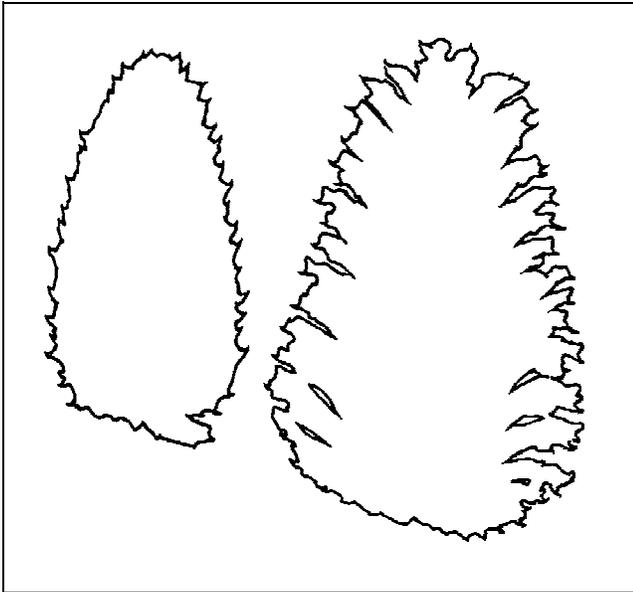


Figure 3. Fruit of Loblolly Pine.

## Culture

**Light requirement:** tree grows in full sun

**Soil tolerances:** clay; loam; sand; acidic; occasionally wet; well-drained

**Drought tolerance:** moderate

**Aerosol salt tolerance:** moderate

## Other

**Roots:** surface roots can lift sidewalks or interfere with mowing

**Winter interest:** no special winter interest

**Outstanding tree:** not particularly outstanding

**Invasive potential:** seeds itself into the landscape

**Ozone sensitivity:** sensitive or moderately tolerant

**Verticillium wilt susceptibility:** not known to be susceptible

**Pest resistance:** long-term health usually not affected by pests

## USE AND MANAGEMENT

Pines are often grouped together in a landscape and they are becoming more popular for planting in parks and in commercial landscapes. They create a light shade which allows grass and other plants to easily grow beneath the canopy. People often complain about the dropping needles, but these may be the same people who complain when it rains.

Loblolly Pine should be grown in full sun on well-drained, acid soil. It is drought-tolerant once established.

The cultivar 'Nana' reaches only 8 to 16 feet in height making it ideal for use as a specimen or screen. It has a dense, rounded silhouette and may become popular, especially for small-scale landscapes, once people discover it.

Propagation is by seed. Young trees larger than four feet tall are very difficult to transplant.

## Pests

Some of this tree's pests are pine bark beetle, borers, pine tip moth, and sawflies.

## Diseases

Loblolly is susceptible to fusiform rust and heart rot.